

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 SP-03 L-03 EB-11 IGA-02 SPM-01

SWF-02 AID-20 AGR-20 OMB-01 TRSE-00 OIC-04 NSC-07

CIAE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PRS-01 IOE-00 DRC-01

AF-10 ARA-16 EA-11 NEA-14 SS-20 /199 W

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P R 190837Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6978

INFO USUN NEW YORK 2153

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION OECD PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 12885

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAGR, FAO

SUBJECT: WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE: HELPFUL VIEWS OF FAO DIRECTOR-
GENERAL BOERMA

REF: ROME 12287

SUMMARY: FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION DIRECTOR-GENERAL
BOERMA, IN INITIAL CALL BY AMBASSADOR MARTIN, EXPRESSED
VIEWS ON PROPOSED NEW WORLD FOOD AUTHORITY THAT ARE CLOSELY
IN LINE WITH U.S. AND OECD COUNTRIES' VIEWS AND MAY BE
HELPFUL IN DEVELOPING REORGANIZATION AND REORIENTATION OF
FAO AS MORE PRACTICAL SOLUTION THAN ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW
WORLD FOOD AUTHORITY. SEPARATE TELEGRAM FOLLOWS ON SHIFTING
MORE AMENABLE VIEWS OF WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE SECRETARY
GENERAL MAREI, PROPONENT OF WORLD FOOD AUTHORITY.
END SUMMARY

1. AMBASSADOR MARTIN PRESENTED BRIEFLY TO DIRECTOR-
GENERAL BOERMA KEY ELEMENTS OF U.S. POSITION, TELLING HIM
THAT UNITED STATES IS COMMITTED TO DO ALL IT CAN TO INCREASE
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FOOD PRODUCTION, PARTICULARLY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, AND IS

PREPARED TO FULLFILL FOOD RE-
SERVE REQUIREMENTS AGREED UPON,

2. WHEN AMBASSADOR MARTIN COMMENTED FAVORABLY AT OUTSET ON SOVIET PARTICIPATION IN WORKING PARTY MEETING, BOERMA ASKED WHETHER THERE IS ANY INDICATION THAT SOVIETS MAY BE WILLING JOIN FAO. AMBASSADOR MARTIN SAID THERE WAS NO INDICATION THEY WOULD DO SO BEFORE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE. BOERMA COMMENTED SADLY THAT THIS WAS HARD PROBLEM FOR HIM TO HANDLE. SOVIET NON-PARTICIPATION GREATLY LIMITS FAO'S CAPACITY TO DEAL WITH MAJOR FOOD PROBLEMS. ONLY ANSWER IS THAT SOVIET UNION SHOULD BE MEMBER. HE RECOGNIZED AT OUTSET THAT SOVIET ABSENCE IN FAO HAD LOGICALLY BEEN KEY FACTOR IN MAKING WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE A UN RATHER THAN FAO CONFERENCE. TWICE LATER IN CONVERSATION HE MENTIONED SOVIET NON-PARTICIPATION IN FAO RECOGNIZING THAT THIS RESTRICTS FAO'S ROLE IN FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMS, AND FAO'S ROLE GENERALLY.

3. WHEN CONVERSATION TURNED TO PROPOSAL FOR NEW WORLD FOOD AUTHORITY, TO OVERLAY FAO, BOERMA READ STATEMENT HE HAD APPROVED FOR USE IF ASKED FOR FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S VIEWS. KEY ELEMENTS OF STATEMENT RECOGNIZED NEED FOR INCREASED RESOURCES FOR FOOD PRODUCTION, AND POSSIBLE NEED FOR PROPOSED NEW AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT FUND IF THAT FUND CAN PROVIDE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR FOOD PRODUCTION THAT CANNOT OTHERWISE BE OBTAINED. (NOTE: THIS IS IN LINE WITH U.S. AND OECD COUNTRIES' POSITIONS. SEE COMMENT AT CLOSE.)

4. AMBASSADOR MARTIN SAID HE IS SKEPTICAL ABOUT WILLINGNESS OF OIL-PRODUCING COUNTRIES TO CONTRIBUTE HEAVILY AND FREELY TO AGRICULTURAL FUND. BOERMA SAID HIS MEETING WITH WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE SECRETARY GENERAL MAREI (MONDAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 16) HAD BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL. MAREI REMAINED CONVINCED HE CAN OBTAIN MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS BY ARAB OIL-PRODUCING COUNTRIES. BOERMA BELIEVES, ON BASIS OF RECENT VISIT TO AREA AND PARTICULARLY TALKS WITH KUWAIT, THAT ARABS WILL NOT CONTRIBUTE. THEY TALKED GENEROUSLY ABOUT ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES IN THEIR AREA AND FOR SPECIFIC GOOD PROJECTS, BUT BOERMA BELIEVES THEY WILL INSIST ON TIGHT CONTROL OF THEIR OWN OUTLAYS. AMBASSADOR MARTIN NOTED THAT OMAN HAD SAID IN WORKING PARTY PLENARY ON CONFIDENTIAL

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SEPTEMBER 17 THAT IT IS WILLING TO CONTRIBUTE, AND COULD SPEAK FOR ITS BROTHER ARABS. BOERMA SAID HE WOULD HAVE BEEN MORE REASSURED IF SAUDI ARABIA HAD BEEN PRESENT AND SPOKEN FOR OMAN AND OTHERS.

5. AMBASSADOR MORTIN REPORTED HE HAD TALKED BI-LATERALLY WITH ALL "MUST" COUNTRIES ON FOOD RESERVE PROGRAM EXCEPT USSR AND INDIA, AND IS SCHEDULED TO TALK WITH BOTH OF THEM THURSDAY

EVENING SEPTEMBER 19.

BOERMA ACCEPTED THAT FAO COULD PLAY NO MORE THAN EXPERT AND GUIDANCE ROLE BECAUSE OF SOVIET NON-PARTICIPATION IN FAO, AND THAT NETOTIATIONS MIGHT BEST PROCEED IN CONTEXT OF TRADE NEGOTIATIONS. HE SAW NO CONFLICT BETWEEN US IDEA AND CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF HIS UNDERTAKING ON FOOD SECURITY IN FAO FRAMEWORK.

6. AMBASSADOR MARTIN SOUNDED BOERMA OUT ON ALTERNATIVES TO PROPOSED REORGANIZATION. ON IDEA OF COORDINATION COMMITTEE OF HEADS OF FAO, IBRD, AND UNDP, BOERMA SAID GERMANS HAD DISCUSSED THIS WITH HIM LAST WEEK AND HE THOUGHT IT WAS WORKABLE ARRANGEMENT. AMBASSADOR MARTIN RAISED HIS OWN IDEA OF SUPPLEMENTARY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE, AND BOERMA CONCURRED IN IT, MENTIONING EFFECTIVE CONSULTATION THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN DEVELOPED IN SPECIFIC FIELDS LIKE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH. WHEN FOOD AID WAS DISCUSSED, BOERMA COMMENTED THAT FAO WAS NOT SET UP FOR DONOR COORDINATION AND COULD NOT PLAY MAIN ROLE. LOGICAL PLACE WAS OECD AND HE RECALLED TALKS WITH WILLIAMS, CHAIRMAN OF DAC, ON THIS.

7. BOERMA ACCEPTED IDEA IMPLICIT IN WFA PROPOSAL THAT UN LEADERSHIP AND ACTION ON FOOD PROBLEM NOT ADEQUATELY OR WELL COORDINATED AND THAT WERE LIMITS ON WHAT FAO COULD DO IN IMPLEMENTING ANY GENERAL STRATEGY AGREED BY WFC. SUGGESTED AS POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE TO GERMAN PROPOSAL LARGER ROLE FOR ECOSOC, IF SUPPORTED BY BETTER STAFF RESOURCES THAT NOW AVAILABLE, WITH FAO "MODERNIZED" TO ENABLE IT TAKE LEAD ROLE AMONG SPECIALIZED AGENCIES.

8. COMMENT: BOERMA'S VIEWS ARE CLOSELY IN LINE WITH THOSE OF US AND OECD COUNTRIES, AND MAY BE USEFUL IN ACHIEVING
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REORGANIZATION AND REORIENTATION OF UN AND FAO AS ALTERNATIVE TO MAREI'S WORLD FOOD AUTHORITY PROPOSAL. MAREI HIMSELF IS BECOMING MORE FLEXIBLE ON FORM OF ORGANIZATION. HIS VIEWS AS STATED IN PLENARY AND TO GROUP B COUNTRIES ON SEPTEMBER 17 ARE SUBJECT OF SEPARATE TELEGRAM.
END VOLPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, ORGANIZATION & MANAGEMENT, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, FOODS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: cunninfx
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ROME12885
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740262-1092
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740931/aaaabaih.tel
Line Count: 160
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: ROME 12287
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cunninfx
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 MAY 2002 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <10 MAR 2003 by cunninfx>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE: HELPFUL VIEWS OF FAO DIRECTOR- GENERAL BEORMA
TAGS: EAGR, PORO, PFOR, US, FAO, WFC, (BOERMA), (MARTIN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005